

Supervisor Knabe Opens New Community and Child Care Center

Supervisor Knabe and other County officials celebrated the grand opening of the first 12,000 square foot Community and Child Care Center in the history of the Housing Authority's Community Development Commission (CDC).



The center, located at the 300-unit Harbor Hills public housing site in Lomita includes an enclosed multi-purpose athletic court, a child care facility for 30-40 kids, conference rooms, and a Sheriff's community policing office.

"This center will provide valuable services in a friendly and secure environment so that parents can now go to work and leave their young children in an on-site affordable child care facility," Supervisor Knabe said. "The facility also gives parents and children a chance to bond with fellow residents, relax, and develop skills that will help them learn to live in a self sufficient manner."

The \$4 million center, located at the southwest corner of Western Avenue and Rancho Palos Verdes Drive, will provide vital services for the site's approximately 800 residents. Activities such as organized sports, recreation, community events, and educational



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Employee of the Month: Public Social Services' Clarence Shaw

Clarence Shaw has worked in the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) for more than 14 years and is currently a Social Services Supervisor assigned to the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program Section. His duties include special projects such as quality assurance, program policy and development, analyzing and interpreting state and federal legislation, acting as a liaison to district office line staff, and handling VIP calls that come into the section.

Known to approach assignments "full steam ahead," and without hesitation, Shaw is regarded as highly motivated, directing his energies to completing assignments thoroughly and in a comprehensive manner. As a member of the IHSS Case Review Team (CRT), Mr. Shaw teamed up with colleagues on a number of assignments to

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EVENT CALENDAR

Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden

301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia 91007

For a list of seminars, workshops and classes, please visit www.arboretum.org or call (626) 821-4623

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles 90036

(323) 857-6000

www.lacma.org

Through Jan 9, 2005 – Renoir to Matisse:

The Eye of Duncan Phillips

Through Jan 9, 2005 – Trajectories: The Photographic Work of Rebbert Flick

Through Jan 17, 2005 – Passion for Drawing: Poussin to Cezanne, Works from the Prat Collection

Through Jan 30, 2005 – Luxury Textiles East and West: Opulent Interiors

Fireworks Spectacular Greets the New Year in Marina del Rey

A brilliant display of fireworks will light up the skies over Marina del Rey on Friday, December 31, to greet the Year 2005. Beginning at the 30-second countdown to midnight, the fireworks will continue into the opening minutes of the New Year.

Zambelli Fireworks Internationale, which started business in Italy more than 100 years ago, will create



the Marina del Rey Fireworks Spectacular. The famous fireworks can be viewed throughout the Marina, however the best locations for viewing are

Fisherman's Village located at 13755 Fiji Way, and Burton Chace Park at 13650 Mindanao Way. Parking is available for \$5 in County of Los Angeles lots throughout the Marina for the evening.

The Zambelli Fireworks Spectacular is presented by Supervisor Don Knabe and the Department of Beaches and Harbors. All County employees are invited to include the Marina del Rey Fireworks as part of their New Year's Eve celebrations.

Special Program Helps Needy Families Successfully Compete in the Job Market

In an effort to help needy families become self-sufficient, the Board of Supervisors recently approved more than \$3 million to develop new and innovative Limited-English Proficient (LEP) training programs for limited and non-English proficient CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids) participants and other needy families.

These programs will provide LEP participants with the vocational and English-language skills necessary to compete for jobs. The programs target specific industries with entry-level and advancement opportunities for over 800 participants. The programs are short-term, teach vocational skills, and provide intensive English language immersion to prepare individuals to successfully qualify for living-wage jobs. Some 32 public educational institutions and the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles were awarded contracts by the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to implement a second round of LEP programs.



Students receive instructions in child care at the Maxine Waters Employment Preparation Center

The first round of LEP programs was developed and implemented in 2003 with seed monies approved by the Board of Supervisors. Some 419 CalWORKs participants completed the first round of classes and 193 of these participants were placed in jobs, resulting in an impressive 46% placement rate for the initial program which ended in September 2003.

Based on the positive results achieved in the first round and the commitment and enthusiasm of all involved in the second round, LEP training has rapidly secured an important position in the DPSS' line-up of specialized services.

Supervisor Yaroslavsky Honors Alex Sullivan

Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky (*left*) honors award-winning, longtime radio news anchor and political editor Alex Sullivan, a beloved fixture on Southern California airwaves since joining KNX 1070 Newsradio to help inaugurate its pioneering all-news format in 1968. Sullivan had quietly told a few close news colleagues of his pending retirement plans after 36 years at KNX, but Supervisor Yaroslavsky decided that Sullivan deserved a more fitting send-off and contrived a fake "interview" assignment to lure the unsuspecting newsman to the Board of Supervisors meeting. There, Board members surprised him with the public tribute. "In covering news, you're always trying to anticipate things because you see something coming up three weeks from now, and maybe a little item in the paper, and then you realize it could loom large," the flustered Sullivan admitted, "Well, this morning, I got sandbagged."



"L. A. County Holiday Celebration" Presents a Kaleidoscope of Seasonal Traditions at the Music Center December 24

Choirs, music ensembles, and dance companies reflecting the vibrant spectrum of cultures found in Southern California express the joy of the season in the 45th Annual L.A. County Holiday Celebration, 3-9 p.m., Friday, December 24 in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion of the Music Center. The show is a gift from the Board of Supervisors to the community at large. Admission is **FREE**, as is the parking under the Music Center.



The Los Angeles County Arts Commission, producer of the L.A. County Holiday Celebration, scouts the region's talent for the show each year. The 40 groups who will perform in the 2004 edition were chosen by a competitive application process. Among the 18 ensembles new to the celebration this year are:

- **Yuval Ron Ensemble**, whose music fuses sacred traditions of the Middle East
- **Orphean Circus**, performance artists led by Ken Roht whose segment is completely designed using products from the 99 Cents Only Stores;
- Two powerhouse mariachi groups - the all-female **Mariachi Divas** under the direction of Cynthia Shea-Carballo, and **Mariachi Sol de Mexico** led by Jose Hernandez
- The **AC Timba Jazz Project**, winners of the Long Beach Jazz Search Competition
- The girls' choir, **Harmonies of St. Thomas**, directed by Antonio Espinal, an apprentice of Esa-Pekka Salonen and director of the Spanish Choir at the Our Lady of Los Angeles Cathedral
- **American Chinese Dance Association**, led by Angela Lai, performing an elegant court dance from the Tang Dynasty



Articles and other submissions to the *County DIGEST* may be edited or otherwise altered for clarity.

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RETIREES

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after 30 or more years of service to the people of the County of Los Angeles:

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER /WEIGHTS & MEASURES: Carmen V. Nacionales

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES: Mary Love, Selwyn C. Reid

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Marcia A. DeLand, David Fickewirth, William A. Hickman, Patrick Meiklejohn
FIRE: Robert J. Dobes, Michael B. Ley, James F. Westerman

HUMAN RESOURCES/OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY: Eiko Stewart, Gilberta Y. Sugita

INTERNAL SERVICES: Susan A. Egner, David J. Sheffield

PROBATION: Lewis Coleman, Richard A. Hellriegel, Darryl F. Pipkin

PUBLIC DEFENDER: Patti A. Huffman

PUBLIC WORKS: Steven A. Chriss, Richard C. LaSance, Steven McMihelk, Dennis E. Sanders

REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK: Charlene DeLeon

SHERIFF: Rudy Campos, William F. Donathan, James Heslin, William R. Mangan, Pamela M. Sivelle, Michael Soderberg

SUPERIOR COURT: Victoria S. Ayers, Glenn L. Covey, Jill F. Holland, Elese D. Rogers

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after 25 or more years of service to the people of the County of Los Angeles:

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Louie Minjarez, David E. Sperling

FIRE: Derek Reyna

INTERNAL SERVICES: Manuel L. Badua, Flor Magni, Domingo Ramos

PROBATION: Merle M. Alferes, Donald D. Duncan, Alfred Melendez

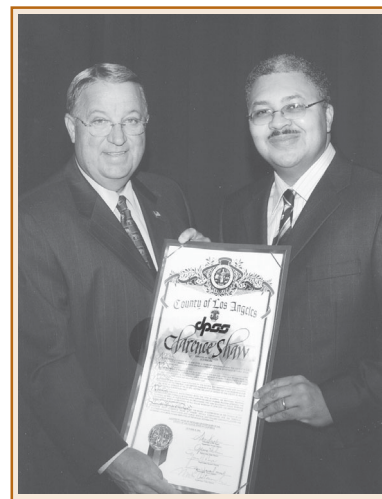
PUBLIC WORKS: Jack L. Arnold, Wilson Santiago

SHERIFF: Phillip L. Bailey, David Lacasella, Wilbert O. Phillips Jr.

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review and measure production and identify trends and methods to improve productivity. His knowledge of program, policy and procedures proved invaluable in the assignment, and allowed him to conduct thorough case audits. His case review findings reflect a comprehensive analysis of subject areas that need clarification and reinforcement.



Mr. Shaw's participation in the review, recommendations and ongoing monitoring of the Personal Care Services Program (PCSP) contributed to an increase in PCSP cases from an average of 78% to 85%. These cases receive higher federal subvention resulting in a decrease in County costs of millions of dollars. For his efforts in this area and that of his Case Review Team, they received the County of Los Angeles' Quality and Productivity Commission's "Mega Million Platinum Eagle Award" in October 2003. "That was a great moment and it just showed how putting teamwork ahead of individual achievement can bring about success," said Shaw.

In addition to his ongoing duties on the CRT, Mr. Shaw has been involved as a liaison with the DPSS Academy to provide training information and curriculum for newly appointed Social Worker Trainees attending classes at the Academy. He also assists with organizing and working on the successful Los Angeles Social Worker's Conference which is provided to all Social Workers in DPSS and the Department of Community and Senior Services.

Highly motivated and dedicated to public service, Shaw believes in advancing himself personally and professionally. He is involved in a number of professional organizations and is active in local affairs such as the Monrovia Citizen Police Academy, the Big "M" Booster Club (Monrovia High School), and is a life member of the Friends of Monrovia Library. He has served twice as a Pasadena City Commissioner, Vice-President and Executive Board Member of the Pasadena NAACP Branch, Executive Board Member of SEIU Local 535, and President of the Board of Trustees at Metropolitan Baptist Church.

Currently, he is a Captain in the Army Reserves and recently returned from Iraq where he served as Commanding Officer of the 806th Adjutant General Company. His 15 years of military service includes active Army,

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HARBOR HILLS

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and self-improvement workshops, will foster self-sufficiency for residents.

After opening remarks, Supervisor Knabe officially opened the new athletic court by lowering basketball rims on the court. He was joined by former public housing resident Nate Archibald who is head coach of the Long Beach Jam professional basketball team and a member of the NBA Hall of Fame. Also on stage was Southern California native Natasha Watley who won two 2004 Olympic Gold medals as star shortstop on the U.S. softball team. Supervisor Knabe and the two honorees played basketball with children who attended the event.

Funds for the center came from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Department's Public Housing Capital Fund and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs. "The new facility is such an asset to our community," said Knabe. "It truly provides a meeting place for members of the public housing community."

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California Army National Guard, and the U.S. Army Reserve. He is also a life member of the Veteran of Foreign Wars.

Clarence holds a Bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff and a Master's degree in public administration from California State University, Dominguez Hills. He is married to Angela Lang Shaw, an analyst for the Department of Mental Health, and they have two children, Clarence II and Amber Nicole.

For such outstanding achievements and contributions to the County of Los Angeles and our nation, we congratulate Clarence Shaw and extend the highest accolades.

Supervisor Antonovich Announces Study Protecting Santa Clara River Watershed

At a September 29 press conference held at the Rancho Camulos Museum, Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich joined Ventura County Supervisor Kathy I. Long and Lieutenant Colonel John V. Guenther (*pictured*) to introduce the \$8.2 million Santa Clara River Watershed Protection Plan Feasibility Study. The study will identify flooding and regional flood control solutions, erosion and sedimentation problems, opportunities to improve water quality, and analyze benefits of restoring riparian habitats.



"The County of Los Angeles is pleased to be collaborating with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the County of Ventura in this important study," Supervisor Antonovich said. "This study is a good example of what the public sector can accomplish when officials in different branches of government work together."

The Santa Clara River drains the largest watershed in Southern California, traveling approximately 84 miles to reach the Pacific Ocean. The watershed covers an area of 1,600 square miles, divided almost equally between Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.

An important goal of this study is to prevent potential flooding within the watershed. This issue is particularly important to the thousands of residents who live near the Santa Clara River, particularly residents in Acton, Agua Dulce, and the Bouquet, Mint, and Sand Canyon neighborhoods.

Another goal of this study is to balance the need for new housing with the protection of environmental resources adjacent to the Santa Clara River, as development occurs on both sides of the County line.

ENRICHING LIVES...

“County Ambassadors: Performance Heroes”

Quality and Productivity Commission’s 18th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program

The Quality and Productivity Commission recognized the County Ambassadors: Performance Heroes at The Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, on Wednesday, October 27. The theme salutes department heads, managers and all the employees who play a key role in carrying out the County’s strategic plan, as well as sharing its vision with the public, co-workers, neighbors, friends and family

across the County. These heroes represent the best project teams demonstrating improved productivity and quality within 38 County departments and County-related agencies. During the annual Awards Luncheon sponsored by the Commission and the Board of Supervisors, Commission Chair Jaclyn Tilley Hill and Master of Ceremonies Chuck Henry, NBC News anchor, announced the award-winning teams:

The Gold Eagle Award

Best Practice: Clinic Effectiveness and Productivity
Department of Health Services/
Harbor-UCLA Medical Center



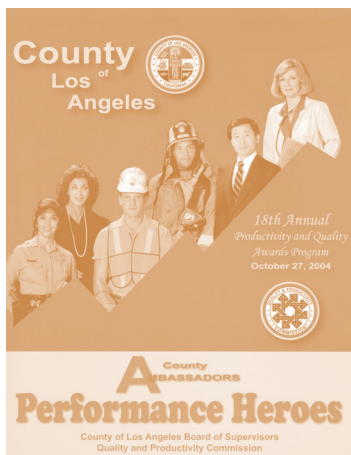
The Silver Eagle Award

Oblique Aerial Digital Imagery (OADI) Project
Department of Regional Planning with the Assessor’s
Office, Chief Information Office, and Public Works

The Bronze Eagle Award

Solar-Powered Bus Stop Amenities Program
Department of Public Works





Other Top Ten Award Winners:

Automated Interface

Partnership

Child Support Services with
Public Social Services

Cervical Cancer Prevention and Education Initiative

Health Services/Office of Women's Health

Clinical and Placement Support

Children and Family Services with Mental Health and
Probation

Competency Restoration Program

Mental Health with the District Attorney, Sheriff,
Public Defender, and Los Angeles Superior Court

HHWMP Electronic Waste (E-Waste) Collection

Public Works

Jail HIV/AIDS Services Program (JHASP)

Sheriff with Health Services

Step-Out Apartments

Community Development Commission/Housing Authority
with Children and Family Services, Mental Health, and
Probation

2004 Commission Chair

Leadership Award

Conny B. McCormack
Registrar-Recorder/
County Clerk



County of Los Angeles VISION

Our *purpose* is to improve the quality of life in Los Angeles County by providing responsive, efficient and high quality public services that promote the self-sufficiency, well-being and prosperity of individuals, families, businesses and communities.

Our *philosophy* of teamwork and collaboration is anchored in our *shared values*:

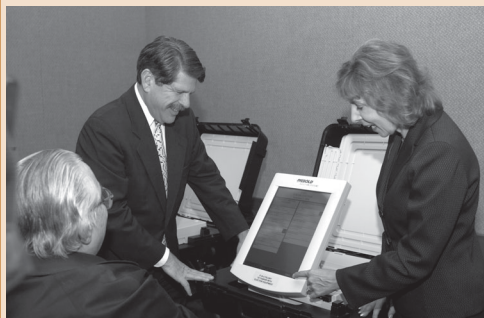
- **A can-do attitude** - we approach each challenge believing that, together, a solution can be achieved.
- **Accountability** - we accept responsibility for the decisions we make and the actions we take.
- **Compassion** - we treat those we serve and each other with kind and caring manner.
- **Commitment** - we always go the extra mile to achieve our mission.
- **Integrity** - we act consistent with our values.
- **Professionalism** - we perform to a high standard of excellence.
- **Respect for diversity** - we value the uniqueness of every individual and their perspective.
- **Responsiveness** - we take the action needed in a timely manner.

Our *position* as the premier organization for those working in the public interest is established by:

- a capability to undertake programs that have public value;
- an aspiration to be recognized through our achievements as the model for civic innovation; and a pledge to always work to earn the public trust.

Supervisor Yaroslavsky Gets a Demonstration on Touch-Screen Voting System

At the Los Angeles Central Library, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky (*center*) gets a demonstration from County Registrar-Recorder Conny McCormack (*right*) of the County's new touch-screen Early Voting system, which was available for voters to use through October 29, at 17 locations throughout the County. Joining them (*lower left*) is Hugh Hallenberg,



chair of Californians Care, a non-partisan coalition of individuals, organizations, community and religious leaders, and elected officials dedicated to ensuring that the state's most vulnerable residents are protected and cared for. Early voting sites in the Third District included Beverly Hills City Hall, Calabasas Library, and the Marvin Braude Constituent Center.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION *continued from page 3*

- **The Greater Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church Youth and Children's Choir** brings younger generation gospel zeal to the show. The congregation's adult **Inspirational Choir** has wowed Holiday Celebration audiences with their artistry for several seasons and returns in 2004.

Other returnees include:

- **Universal Dance Designs Kennedy Tap Company** directed by master tapper Arlene Kennedy, whose school has produced more professional level and Broadway tap dancers than any other in Los Angeles
- Lynn Dally's **Jazz Tap Ensemble** and Monica Favand's **TRIP Dance Theatre** who are creating new works for the Holiday Celebration
- The **Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles**, with holiday music from French, Spanish and Jewish traditions
- Pat Taylor's **Jazz Antiqua Dance and Music Ensemble** reprising their trilogy of dances to Duke Ellington (*Entre'Acte* from *The Nutcracker*), Mahalia Jackson ("Go, Tell it on the Mountain") and Ella Fitzgerald ("Let It Snow"), one of the hits of the 2003 show.

Complete program information will be available after December 1 at www.holidaycelebration.org and 213-972-3099. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. Patrons may come and go throughout the six hour performance. Reservations for tickets to the show or parking are not necessary. Those who can't make it to the Music Center can watch the live broadcast of Holiday Celebration on KCET.

The Arts Commission also produces "L.A. Holiday Celebration," a one-hour television music and dance special highlighting the best performances from the live show. The highlights show drawn from the 2003 live presentation at the Music Center, will be carried by PBS stations across the country in December.



The **Los Angeles County Arts Commission**, Laura Zucker, Executive Director, provides leadership in cultural services of all disciplines for the largest County in the United States, encompassing 88 municipalities. The Arts Commission provides leadership and staffing to support the regional blueprint for arts education, *Arts for All*; administers a grants program that funds more than 250 nonprofit arts organizations annually; funds the largest arts internship program in the country in conjunction with the Getty Trust; programs the John Anson Ford Theatres and supports the Los Angeles County Cultural Calendar on ExperienceLA.com. In addition to producing the local and national Holiday Celebrations, the Commission funds more than 60 free concerts each year in public sites. The 2004-2005 President of the Arts Commission is Carlos Barrón.

Holiday Boat Parade Expands to Second Day in Marina del Rey

The 42nd annual Holiday Boat Parade, sponsored by the Marina del Rey Community Boat Parade Committee and the Department of Beaches and Harbors, sets sail for two days in the Main Channel of Marina del Rey. For the first time, the annual Marina del Rey Holiday Boat Parade will be expanded to a second day and held on Friday and Saturday evenings, December 10 and 11. The Friday evening parade will run between 7 and 9 p.m. and the Saturday evening boat parade between 6 and 8 p.m. It is estimated that dozens of beautifully lighted and decorated boats will participate in the event that is free to the public.



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Supervisors Burke and Molina Join Community in Sending Strong Message Against Litter

Florence-Firestone Enhancement Efforts Continue with Cleanup Event

On Saturday, October 9, Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke and Supervisor Gloria Molina joined the Department of Public Works (LADPW) and hundreds of volunteers in sending a strong message about keeping the streets clean in the Florence-Firestone community. The Florence-Firestone Beautification Event, which served as a reminder to hold County departments and local residents accountable for a clean community, included trash pick-up, planting of shrubs and painting of a new pollution prevention-themed mural. The area is in both the First and Second Districts, and the event was part of the County's "Can It!" storm water pollution prevention campaign. The purpose of the campaign is to remind the public to put their trash in a trash can, not on the ground. Additionally, the County held a free Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic Waste Roundup.

"I've been promoting the economic development of this area, and beautification is an important part of continuing to upgrade the lifestyle of the residents," Supervisor Burke said. "That's why I made it a point to join the volunteers today."



Supervisor Molina and local artist Arturo Gonzalez stand before the mural he designed to inspire the Florence-Firestone community to take pride in their neighborhood. Mr. Gonzalez and his wife currently operate the "East L.A. Community Arts and Mural Program," a non-profit organization they created which is dedicated to helping local children develop their artistic abilities and to providing them with an alternative to "tagging."

An ethnically diverse group of more than 600 volunteers of all ages showed up, including many families with members from grandparents to grandchildren joining in. Some volunteers came as early as 7 a.m. to start setting up resource tables with information on County services.

The actual trash cleanup began at 9 a.m. with groups of volunteers assembling in 12 zones throughout the community. They picked up trash from their own neighborhoods, and by the time both Supervisors arrived, the streets were bare of litter. More than 31,000 pounds of trash had been collected.

Around 10:45 a.m., both Supervisors arrived at Roosevelt Park to help paint a mural that illustrated a pollution prevention theme. The mural

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Supervisor Burke joined two young volunteers in helping to paint the mural at the event. The mural features residents doing their part to "keep the community clean and green," and was designed by Arturo Gonzalez of the East L.A. Community Arts and Mural Program.

Supervisor Knabe Breaks Ground for Dockweiler State Beach Renovations

In a groundbreaking ceremony, Supervisor Don Knabe announced the commencement of the first phase of the Dockweiler State Beach capital project. “The renovation for Dockweiler State Beach is important to both the residents of the County of Los Angeles, as well as the tourists that come in every year to our beautiful coastline here in Southern California,” Supervisor Knabe said. “This project will make Dockweiler State Beach a clean, friendly environment for people of all ages.”



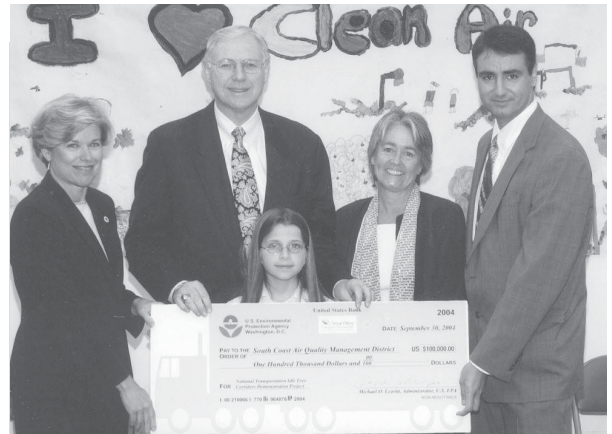
In addition to the renovations, playground equipment, signage and new landscaping, the site will both enhance the recreational facility and increase public awareness of environmental issues. Construction for the first phase of the project is expected to take a full year. The \$11 million project is jointly funded by County of Los Angeles Prop. A and State of California Prop. 40 bond funds. Improvements will include replacement of four restroom buildings, an entry kiosk, refurbishment of maintenance and lifeguard facilities, a concession building, the recreational vehicle park with conversion of all spaces to full hook-ups and parking lots.

Supervisor Antonovich Introduces Program to Reduce Diesel Emissions

At a September 30 community event with students from Horace Mann Elementary School, representatives from the Air Quality Management District (AQMD) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), AQMD Board member Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich announced an innovative program designed to reduce harmful diesel emissions.

“The adverse health effects of high exposure to diesel exhaust place our children at risk,” Supervisor Antonovich said. “We must be aggressive in our efforts to clean our air and reduce cancer-causing emissions.”

A 10-year study recently released by the University of Southern California indicates that young people who grow up in areas with heavy air pollution suffer long-term reduced lung capacity, and are at greater risk for illness and premature death as adults. Several students from Horace Mann Elementary, a school near Interstate 5, attended the event along with Lynda Burlison, Nurse Coordinator for the Glendale Unified School District, who spoke about the many students that she treats with respiratory-related illnesses.



Pictured from left to right are: Deborah Jordan (Director of Air Programs, US EPA Region 9), Supervisor Antonovich, Kristina Grigorian (Horace Mann Elementary School student), Lynda Burlison (Nurse Coordinator, Glendale Unified School District), and Paul Bubbosh (EPA).

The new program, funded by the AQMD and EPA, will install plug-in power modules in 20 spaces at a truck stop on Interstate 5. It is common practice for truckers at truck stops to leave their engines idling for extended periods of time to provide power, heating and air conditioning for their cabs.

With this new program, truckers can achieve the same conveniences and necessities in a cleaner way, through “plug-in” power at truck stops. Power modules at truck stops allow them to turn off their engines, and have access to onboard heating, cooling, lighting and appliances – as well as a much quieter environment for a good rest.

A decade ago, Supervisor Antonovich joined the AQMD’s governing board in adopting a series of children’s health initiatives. Since then, millions of dollars have been allocated to help schools reduce diesel emissions from school buses by switching to alternative fuel school buses or through the installation of particulate traps for diesel engines.

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now decorates a wall on Nadeau Street and Maie Avenue, in the First District near a border with the Second District, directly across from the Blue Line. One participant said, "The arrival of both Supervisors really created a buzz. People were so excited, and it seemed they felt more unified even if they lived in different districts." The community was so pleased with the way the mural turned out that there are now plans to make a reproduction that can be placed in another location, as well.

The volunteers then moved on to Edison Middle School to plant shrubs. Directly following their efforts, the mood turned festive. From 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., there was a community celebration at the school. Supervisors Burke and Molina joined KPWR 106 FM, while cheerleaders from Roosevelt Park led cheers from the crowd. KCBS-TV Channel 2 News anchors Vera Jimenez and John Elliott served as program emcees.

Local partners with the County included Blockbuster, Costco, Florence-Firestone Chamber of Commerce, Florence Owl Rexall Drugs, Godiva Chocolates, In-N-Out Burger, KCAL/KCBS-TV, Kmart, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, McDonalds, Metro, Monrovia Nursery, Orchard Supply & Hardware, Quiznos, Sir Speedy Printing, SOPP Ford, Toys "R" Us and the U.S. Coast Guard.

"We have worked hard throughout the years to improve the quality of life in Florence-Firestone. But, as we move forward with continued enhancement efforts, I have grown weary and discouraged about our littered streets, and our curbs and alleys piled with junk. We must not only hold our County departments accountable for maintaining basic services in this area, but everyone in our community must do their part every single day," Supervisor Gloria Molina said. "Every tax-paying family and business in this community deserves a clean environment, and to those who disrespect our community's image and who disregard our hard work, I say, you will be held accountable."

One event organizer reported that the County's graffiti van was a big hit with youths at the event. Another said that a number of elementary and middle school students were asking if there could be another cleanup the following week.



Supervisors Burke and Molina (in the back row) took time out from helping to finish the mural for a photo op with young volunteers.

Supervisor Burke said, "The beautification event was conducted not only to clean local neighborhoods, but also to instill a strong sense of pride and ownership in local residents to care for their surroundings on an ongoing basis. I have to say this event has really succeeded."

BOAT PARADE

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Theme of this year's parade is *Sights and Sounds of the Holidays*, with prize packages awarded to category winners. Fireworks that note the beginning of the boat parade will be shot off the south jetty at 5:55 p.m. Saturday. As in previous years, the parade boats will be judged on Saturday evening since the Friday parade is an informal event.

The *Best Overall* winner will receive two round trip tickets to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to judge the *Winterfest Boat Parade*. An exchange of winners has been established between Marina del Rey and Fort Lauderdale to respectively judge each parade.

Parking for the Holiday Boat Parade is available for \$5 in County of Los Angeles lots designated with blue signage. County employees are invited to come to Marina del Rey for this festive holiday event. Best locations for viewing are Fisherman's Village on Fiji Way and Burton Chace Park, located at 13650 Mindanao Way.

For additional information, contact the *Marina del Rey Holiday Boat Parade* at (310) 670-7130 or visit the organization's Web site at www.mdrboatparade.org.

Share It

Department of Consumer Affairs

Smart Holiday Shopping Tips



'Tis the shopping and gift giving season, a time when we give generously to charity, and a time when the holiday spirit may overcome our usual caution. These tips will help you avoid post holiday problems and New Year budget blues.

- **Prepare a holiday budget and stick to it.** Paying with cash can help keep you off the, “buy now, pay later” road to a debt filled New Year. If you must pay by credit card, use just one. It makes it easier to keep track of your spending.
- **Know a seller’s refund policy before you buy.** Some may offer a full refund, some store credit only, and some may offer no refund at all. **Save all your receipts!** You’ll need them for returns or exchanges.
- **If an item is on sale, make sure you’re charged the sale price, not more.** When an item on sale is scanned, the regular price will be charged if the store has **not changed the price in the scanner to the sale price. Check your receipt before you leave the cash register to make sure you were charged the right price.**
- **Buying Online?** Make certain the Web site is secure before entering your personal or financial information. Keep in mind that paying by credit card gives you certain legal protections if you don’t receive what you ordered, an advantage when buying online, by mail or by phone. When figuring the cost of an item, don’t forget to include the shipping charges.
- **When should I receive an ordered item?** Federal law requires orders you place by mail, phone or online to be shipped by the date promised. If no time was stated, delivery must be made within 30 days. You can demand a refund if the goods aren’t shipped on time.
- **A contract is a legal document. Read it very carefully and don’t sign it until you really understand it.** Ask yourself if the interest rate is reasonable and what the total cost of the item is when interest is included. Then ask, “Can I afford it?”
- **Guard against identity theft!** Do not write your address, phone number, social security or driver’s license numbers on credit card receipts. Avoid giving personal information over the telephone or internet unless **you initiated the contact.**
- **Gift Certificates are popular and in California, by law, most don’t expire. Depending on its policy,** a store may redeem gift certificates for cash, or for cash and merchandise up to the certificate’s value, or replace it with another certificate for any balance left once you’ve used the original. Nearly all service fees on retailer gift cards and gift certificates have been banned since January 1, 2004.
- **Donating to charity? Charities and their agents can be bogus.** Donate only to charities you know are reputable. Before you give anyone money, ask for identification and written information about the organization. You should also ask how much of your donation goes to charitable works and how much to fundraising and overhead, like salaries. Be wary of phone solicitors and those who come to your door unless you know them. **Do not give your credit card number or personal financial information to people you don’t know!**

For further information on this and other consumer protection topics, please contact the Department of Consumer Affairs at (213) 974-1452.



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